MATWATCH

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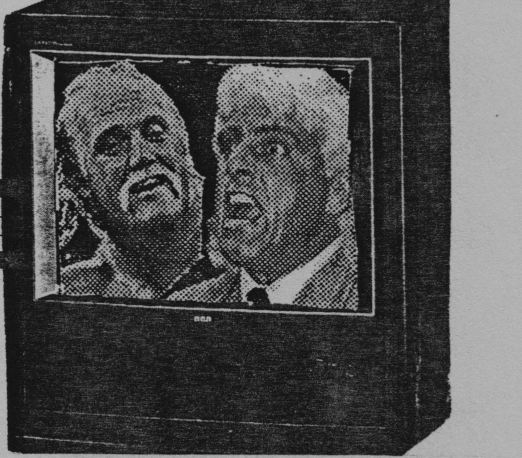
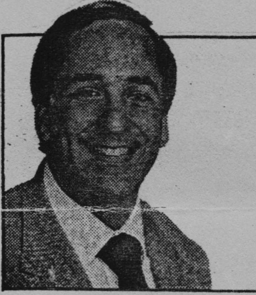


Matwatch Extra

JOE PEDICINO GOES: NOT THE ONLY SAD STORY

In some quarters, this will be far from my most popular column. Some will say it's too long. Some insiders will be offended. No, it's not unbiased. It focuses on a person I unabashedly call a friend, a no-no for wrestling bulletin editors.

It's week old news that Joe Pedicino has left World Championship Wrestling, Inc. The decision was Joe's and the parting was amicable between Joe and WCW chief Jim Herd; no bitter words, no bridges burned. In fact, Herd left open the door for a possible future arrangement. Don't worry about where Joe will get his next buck. Late last year, he launched an advertising agency in Atlanta which is already off to a successful start and potentially more lucrative than any wrestling endeavor (unless you're Hulk Hogan).



Steve Beverly

This is not intended as a defense for Joe Pedicino. He needs none. Nor is it meant to generate sympathy for his side of the story. Joe was neither a martyr, nor blameless for his problems in the NWA. He's not the best office politician in the world. Nor is it designed to paint a picture that the NWA will die without Joe. His departure won't change the price of pork chops at Safeway or Grand Union. Something new will fill the slot JOE PEDICINO KNOWS... vacates. You may have never liked Joe's work on the air and if not, I do not ask you to change.

However, I tell this story as a microcosm of broader-ranging problems in the NWA, problems of personality conflicts, petty differences and jealousies and intolerance of alternative viewpoints---difficulties, as I see it, which have much more of an effect on this group's success than whether one of its own gets on the ARSENIO HALL SHOW.

Pedicino is no unqualified angel. He'll be the first to admit it. His NWA detractors considered him at times to be brash, blunt and a few say full of sour grapes if his views weren't adopted. I can't judge. I don't work in the office. Joe will defend to the death a belief. I know...he and I have clashed a few times over an issue; sometimes, he's right, sometimes I am. A few NWA insiders felt Joe invoked the name of Vince McMahon once too often in meetings as an example to follow. I'm far from the biggest WWF fan in America but Titan is successful, last I looked. However, it remains a curse word to many NWA vets. And Joe took the heat on occasion for on-air production errors, which may or may not have been his.

Some critics insist Joe just wasn't happy because his on-air role wasn't bigger, accusing him of ego problems. Folks, broadcasters who don't have at least a marginal ego are hard to find. I include myself in that. Without career ambitions, you stagnate and if that's ego, so be it. It's like Jesse Ventura's poignant ROYAL RUMBLE line: "You can never be a great wrestler without an ego." Ditto for broadcasters.

Frankly, I knew the resignation was inevitable. Joe found the last five months in WCW a near-nightmare. And he is far from the only one who has taken the brunt of backbiting, infighting and jealousies which threaten even the most robust business.

When Joe first came to the NWA, a trusted friend (not me) advised him not to go. The well-known insider said: "You'd be better off waiting until the second year. I have a feeling they'll spend the first year learning the business and make a lot of mistakes. If they do, you could go down with the ship. If they're smart, they'll get their act together the next year and that's the time to be there." Pedicino considered that but, buoyed by three years of PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK and developing one of the nation's first marathon TV wrestling blocks, Joe opted for the ground floor.

Joe primarily wanted to be a producer. He felt he could bring a fresh creativity to attract hardcore WWF fans who weren't crossover viewers. While he had much input in developing NWA POWER HOUR, his role ultimately dissolved into that of show editor. JOE PEDICINO KNOWS... was originally conceived by Herd as an opinionated segment to stir up fans and build a one-on-one relationship with viewers. But internal flaps changed JPK's focus several times. The last two months, with Joe pontificating on sometimes marginal issues, were---to be honest---dull.

In my view, Joe never had a chance with the NWA. When he first went in, the Crocketts, still hanging tenaciously to some power, complained. They'd been the only major promoters to withhold clips from PWTW after Jim Crockett and Dusty Rhodes accused Joe of masterminding an effort to lure Ric Flair and the Road Warriors to a Tribune Broadcasting-backed revamping of the AWA. Some old-line Crockett wrestlers adopted a standoffish attitude toward Joe.

Next, he encountered heat after he ghost-wrote a column in the first NWA WRESTLING WRAPUP quoting polls in MATWATCH and THE WRESTLING OBSERVER comparing the quality of RAGIN' CAJUN CLASH to WRESTLEMANIA V. A former NWA'er told me, "You'd have thought Joe committed a sacrilege by acknowledging the sheets." Yet, the column was okayed and encouraged by WCW management. In the eyes of some wrestlers, that made Joe one of "them," part of an ugly, escalating war between us (wrestlers) and them (management) which still continues. Funny, TBS quoted MATWATCH in promos for its home videos.

In the course of a booking shift from George Scott to a committee setup, some committee members felt they had veto power over all facets of the company, including announcers. Sources other than Pedicino told MATWATCH in an early

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THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

TITAN PLANS MAJOR OVERSEAS EXPANSION; INCLUDES TV

STAMFORD, CT----Titan Sports plans a major international expansion in the next year, which includes taping television in foreign locales.

MATWATCH has learned Titan is scheduling major stops in London, Paris and West Germany with possible secondary visits to Australia and South America. Included in the plan, told on Atlanta's WSB Radio last Wednesday, will be regular taping of WWF syndicated shows on an international basis.

A source close to Titan told us, "It's the next natural progression in our business. It also should solidify in the public's mind that the WWF title is the only championship to be defended around the world."

The international programs come hot on the heels of an agreement for the WWF to appear in a joint show with both All Japan and New Japan promotions later this year in Tokyo.

ROLLERGAMES CANCELED; TITAN, TURNER GO AFTER VACATED STATIONS

LOS ANGELES----Titan Sports and Turner Program Services are vying for time periods opening on 130 U.S. television stations in the wake of the cancellation of ROLLERGAMES.

The "crash TV" revival of the skating derby will have its final airing the weekend of March 3-4, according to ROLLER producer David Sams.

The day after the cancellation was announced, Titan signed four new outlets after sending a fax message to stations which read, "You bought ROLLERGAMES because you were told it was the WWF of the 1990s. Now, why not take the real thing?"

TPS is also making a proposal to the vacated ROLLER stations, particularly in markets where NWA PRO does not air.

DANGEROUSLY THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST WCW

NEW YORK----A Federal Express letter was reportedly mailed to World Championship Wrestling, Inc., last week threatening legal action against the company on behalf of former NWA manager Paul E. Dangerously.

Dangerously, fired by booker Ric Flair in September, is still in a dispute over settlement of monetary terms for the five months left on his contract when he was dismissed.

The letter is said to have cited WCW for wrongful firing and charges them with false advertising for showing Dangerously's old WRESTLING HOTLINE commercials during a recent TBS wrestling show and during the TBS movie "Gator" in January.

Sources say attorneys are giving WCW executives five days to respond before filing suit in New York Federal Court. MATWATCH tried unsuccessfully to reach WCW senior vice president Jim Herd last Friday but will attempt again this week to discuss the situation with Herd.

BLACKWELL BOOTED FROM SOUTHERN----AGAIN

GRIFFIN, GA. ---- For the second time in four months, Jerry Blackwell has bounced from the helm of Southern Championship Wrestling from Georgia.

Blackwell, who lost SCW in a hostile takeover by TV producer Larry Oldag and wrestler Jim Powell in October, and regained it in December, was forced out again by Oldag Jan. 30 for undisclosed reasons. But the reconstituted Southern had suffered at the gate and in on-air product since Blackwell's return.

Oldag is trying to locate a full-time administrator and TV producer for the group, which hangs onto approximately 15 mostly Georgia-area wrestlers.

ICW WRESTLERS MAY TAKE HIKE; PRODUCTION COMPANY UPSET

NEW YORK----Beset by several major disputes, promoters Mario and Angelo Savoldi were on the verge of losing key International Championship Wrestling competitors last week but some insiders believe the dispute will be settled.

Mario Savoldi fired ICW announcer Bob Dow and a New York-based production company is threatening not to tape future ICW shows, claiming it is owed $100,000 in production fees.

A key source close to the situation says all the talent "wants out," after a Feb. 11 TV taping on Long Island was canceled. The next ICW show is scheduled at Cutcher's in upstate New York Feb. 21 but MATWATCH has not been able to determine what effect a boycott will have on the promotion.

Pinfall Profile

TYSON, JAPAN, THE WORLD: WHAT IT MEANS FOR TITAN

If you listen to hardcore fans across the U.S., as I have on my phone the last two weeks, one would assume the NWA is the Rip Van Winkle of wrestling organizations while Titan Sports is an international version of Hurricane Hugo.

Between the announcement of heavyweight boxing champ Mike Tyson as referee of the Hulk Hogan-Randy Savage WWF title match on THE MAIN EVENT on NBC Feb. 23, the signing of a joint card with All Japan and New Japan promotions and plans to expand its weekly TV origination into international locales, the WWF appears to have won more than the trifecta at Daytona Beach Kennel Club.

Draw your own conclusions as to what these deals will mean to Titan's overall image. But let's put some perspective into the TV implications of each:

1] THE TYSON SIGNING: It, first off, may or may not result in big ratings for the MAIN EVENT special. After last year's Randy Savage turn failed to draw 20% of the national audience on NBC, the peacock network rescinded plans to carry the SLAMMY AWARDS. With as much of a buildup as Hogan-Savage, ABC's growing comedy lineup easily took the WWF in the Nielsen ratings and deposited MAIN EVENT in 53rd place.

A given: this year's MAIN EVENT has to draw at least 24-25 per cent of the audience (remember, even Hogan-Andre two years ago only tallied a 25 share) or there will not be a fourth prime time special.

Tyson may be good for a few points but whether it's enough to overcome FULL HOUSE, an ABC show now drawing 29-30% of the audience most weeks and feeding healthy numbers to three other family-oriented comedies and 20/20. You can expect a heckuva sell job by Titan the next two weekends on TV for the NBC show but I don't see any record-breaking shares coming from this show and Tyson's impact will probably be marginal. Prediction: a 23 share and probably NBC will give the WWF one more special because, even with that low number, it tops the usual NBC figures on Friday nights.

2] THE JAPAN SHOW: From an international basis, this is a major deal. For one thing, the Japan promotions have been aligned for so many years with NWA-affiliated wrestlers and McMahon has paid the kind of money and demanded the exclusivity necessary to keep hot wrestlers from making Oriental swings. Japanese journalists have reported Flair has blamed TBS for his pulling out of the Egg Dome show but I've talked to two key TBS sources who say Flair made that decision on his own. The beef apparently was whether Flair's pay for the show would be weighed against his TBS guarantee. Another reported Flair contention is that TBS didn't want him missing a TV taping this close to a major pay-per-view. But WCW could have easily used the revenue shared from a major show in Japan with its wrestlers on board. McMahon has long coveted being able to run Japan on his own. He now has his most important inroad.

However, as far as U.S. TV is concerned, this move will mean little. Outside of hardcore fans who trade videos, Japan wrestling doesn't have the impact here a lot of us would like to believe.

PREDICTION: This arrangement between Titan and Japan will continue only until McMahon can find a way to commandeer serious TV time and run Japan head-to-head against All Japan and New Japan. There also remains the heavy competition, TV or not, from Akira Maeda's UWF---the hottest group going in the Pacific.

3] INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION: This does merit the most serious consideration of all. Competitively, this could be a big factor in the battle for syndicated stations. Why? If McMahon's sales people can go in and sell a market that we're going to be bringing you wrestling from Oakland, Cal., West Berlin and London this week while the NWA is going from Greenville, S.C., and Ozark, Ala., any guesses what will have more impact with a program director other than those in the South? Eventually, the NWA is going to have to try to make a serious attempt at the West Coast and New York if it is to retain stations in those markets and, so far, has been unsuccessful at gaining a viewable time slot in Los Angeles. The image on an international basis of Hogan, or whomever, defending a "world" title literally in all points of the world while the NWA belt is primarily an East Coast and midwestern title is going to be hammered home in subtle, yet pointed ways on television.

Is it a knockout punch for the NWA? No. Turner Broadcasting's strong financial comeback has made it one of the five best performing broadcast stocks on the American Exchange and enough of TBS is well-heeled to offset the losses of WCW. But this is the kind of situation McMahon has been a master at pulling out of the fire since his 1987 decision to compete with STARRCADE head-on with his SURVIVOR SERIES. At some point, TBS has to prove capable of answering the bell.

MATWATCH SHOPPERS NETWORK

Video Tapes

BILL MOFFITT JR., 6065 LAYTON ST., ALTA LOMA CA 91701, is interested in tapes of the following promotions: HERITAGE, GEORGIA ALL-STAR, SOUTHERN, NORTH AMERICAN and CHICAGO CHALLENGE.

MATT LAYTON, 6812 BROOKMILL RD., BALTIMORE MD 21215, wants to sell 240 hours of commercial-free wrestling tapes. Matt says there are "no boring jobber matches." Send for a free price list.

CORRECTION: DIANE DEVINE's address is 4150 E. IOWA AVE., SUITE 110, DENVER CO 80222-3805. She's looking for tapes with RONNIE ETCHISON, ED WISKOSKI, MIKE GEORGE and JOHN TOLOS. We had erroneously listed the suite as 100 last time.

Bulletins/Annuals

TAPE UPDATE AWARDS YEARBOOK CALENDAR, Brian Tramel's first end-of-the-year review, is available for $2.00. If you tell Brian you heard about it in MATWATCH, he'll give you three free issues of TAPE UPDATE. Send to 1806 SELF CIRCLE, APT. B, JONESBORO AR 72401. Also, every month, Brian offers T-shirts featuring the cover art on TU.

FANTASY FEDERATION, Jeff Cohen's book-your-dream matches paper, has its February edition out. It's only $1 and great fun. Get it from 50 SHELLEY LANE, GREAT NECK NY 11023.

The annual PRO WRESTLING TORCH YEARBOOK is a fine read. Editor Wade Keller is offering a $12.50 special---his current yearbook and his midyear 1989 review both in the package. Also, PWT publishes every two weeks for $1.25 an issue and you will enjoy it. Get it from P.O. BOX 201844, MINNEAPOLIS MN 55420. The current yearbook is $6.25 alone.

GLOBAL WRESTLING, Tom Burke's update and nostalgia bulletin, is celebrating its 15th anniversary. Tom is offering 15 issues of GW plus a free championship wrestling program for $21. Tom also offers an all-women's wrestling bulletin and nostalgia sheets, along with more than 1200 back issues of wrestling magazines. Order from GLOBAL WRESTLING, 31 Groveland St., Springfield MA 01108.

Our friend Adam Horowitz has another good year of BETWEEN THE ROPES planned. Adam devotes a good deal of time to making BTR better each month. For a sample issue and prices, write to ADAM at 336 HARBOR DR., LIDO BEACH NY 11561.

WRESTLING PERSPECTIVE is a new opinion bulletin I've just received from David Skolnick and Paul MacArthur. It's a very neatly-produced letter and is available at $1 per issue up to a maximum of $3 for 3. Make checks to PAUL MACARTHUR, P.O. BOX 401, CAMILLUS NY 13031-0401.

PRO WRESTLING ENQUIRER HEADLINE NEWS is Harvey Cobb's new format bulletin out monthly. It's $1 each. Order from Harvey at 2619 RUFFIN WAY, NORFOLK VA, 23504.

MATWATCHINGS

IS THE DOCTOR IN?: All sorts of crazy rumors abounding concerning Steve Williams in the past week. The major one was that he was fed up and was leaving the NWA for Japan and independents (he is working the Tokyo Egg Dome show). But late word is that he was likely to stay. He worked TV for WCW last Tuesday and the Lex Luger-Steve Williams match for the WRESTLE WAR '90 pay-per-view appears still a go.

COMING IN: Doug Furnas will work the NWA between Japan dates and did TV last week. Word that Dan Kroffat is coming in to join him appears premature. Also announced: Dutch Mantel entering WCW as a face and at the outset, will team with Tommy Rich against Buzz Sawyer and Muta (I hope that changes. Muta's being relegated way too far).

THE WHOLE THING: In case you haven't read it elsewhere, here's the rest of the WW'90 card: (World tag title) Steiners vs. Andersons, Road Warriors vs. New Skyscrapers (Danny Spivey is indeed back), Freebirds vs. Zenk/Pillman, Dudes vs. Sawyer/Muta, Norman vs. Cactus Jack Manson and Rock & Roll Express vs. Midnight Express. There should be good work on the show but how it will fare in the shadow of THE MAIN EVENT two nights earlier is anybody's guess.

DROPOUT: The new Wrestling School Dropout character on ICW is one of the funniest to come along since Rick Steiner. If handled well, I can see lots of career growth for WSD.

NETWORKING: After once being the originating station for MID-ATLANTIC CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING, WRAL in Raleigh has dropped NWA PRO, which had only been airing at 1 a.m. Sundays. NWA now only has WLFL in Raleigh-Durham. In Atlanta, Boni Blackstone has shifted the CWA show (recaps of USWA matches) to 2 a.m.

THEY WOULDN'T, WOULD THEY?: To hear some tell it, the defection of veteran promoters Carl & Elliott Murnick to the WWF could spell trouble for traditional NWA tv time in the Carolinas. Titan sources say the Murnicks are heavily wooing a number of long-time Carolina NWA stations to switch to WWF, particularly in Charlotte, Raleigh and Greensboro.

HE DOESN'T HAVE IT: Syndicator Tor Berg has told friends of ours he does not have rights to New Japan Superpowers, as originally reported. What he does have is a 2-hour version of the Tokyo Egg Dome show he's pitching to local stations.

A BIG HIT: SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT, headed by the apparent Hogan-Warrior split, pulled an 11.1 rating and 34 share of audience, its second best numbers ever. If you don't think Hogan-Warrior will hit big, examine those numbers and RATINGS RAP figures this week.

CONFLICTING CHOKES: Our film expert on the West Coast, Chris Crosby, checked with Ned Beatty's agent, who says the Eddy Mansfield-inspired film, "Chokehold," has already been shot and Beatty is waiting on its release. That's quite a contrast from the story we got from Eddy that the movie would be made this spring. We're still checking.

TITAN TRAILS: Black Bart in as a jobber for TV. Also upcoming on TV, a Jim Duggan-Honky Tonk Man clash which features "involvement" by Greg Valentine. Buddy Rose is also coming in. Maybe he & Dusty can be the Doublemint Twins.

ARSENIO WHO?: Lots of confusion in the camp of the ARSENIO HALL SHOW after the recent story in THE WRESTLING OBSERVER concerning charges that TBS was blocking its stars from appearing with Arsenio. Jim Herd categorically denied to us that the Turner people were standing in the way, telling us: "We'd be a fool to turn something like that down." In the last week, Dave Meltzer has heard from two different camps from ARSENIO, one stating that in no way were they even interested in NWA wrestlers and another insisting they wanted Ric Flair in April. One entertainment analyst told me last week, "Arsenio owns this show with Paramount and if he wanted Flair on, he'd get him, simple as that."

YOU DID IT, NO...YOU DID...: Lots of confusion remains over Ric Flair's withdrawal from the Egg Dome which eventually led to the Japan promotions agreeing to a joint card with Titan. The Japanese press report Flair laid the blame on TBS for his cancellation but sources inside Turner insist Jack Petrik still was planning to make the trip with Flair and Muta until the withdrawal. A rift reportedly developed on whether Flair's Japan payoff would count against his Turner guarantee.

THE LINEUPS: Some of the planned NWA announcer changes were bumped at the eleventh hour. Here are the new lineups: Jim Ross/Gordon Solie (POWER HOUR), Ross/Jim Cornette (WCW), Ross/Missy Hyatt (NWA MAIN EVENT/TBS), Chris Cruise/Terry Funk (WORLD WIDE), Lance Russell/Michael Hayes (NWA PRO) and Bob Caudle/Teddy Long (NWA MAIN EVENT/Syndicated).

SYNDEXING IN N.Y.: To avoid problems with the new syndicated exclusivity rules, WCW will produce an NWA PRO edition exclusively for WPIX in New York. Ross & Hayes will call it.

CONGRATS: To Jim Ross on being the top vote-getter in any category in our MATWATCH TV AWARDS poll for the second year in a row. And to MATWATCHer Ric Carter and his wife on the birth of their daughter.

NOON TALK: Joe Pedicino guested Jan. 31 on WES MINTER LIVE, a two-hour midday talk show on WSB Radio in Atlanta (see LINES OF THE WEEK). Joe was gracious to his former employer but almost at a loss when one caller told him a 900 hotline had reported he and Boni Blackstone were engaged.

TRAVELIN' MAN: Lucha Libre sensation Conan is going on a tour of Japan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

HOLLYWOOD HEAVIES: Congratulations to Danny Wolf and Dan Farren on their successful premiere of Hollywood Heavyweight Wrestling in L.A. Jan. 27. Chavo Guerrero won the Hollywood heavyweight belt in a Slaughter Royale.

GOODHEART'S GOODIES: Joel Goodheart did $22,000 for his indie show highlighted by David Sammartino-Larry Zbyszko the same night. Goodheart has another show March 31.

ANNUAL NOTES: If you ordered your MATWATCH ANNUAL and it hasn't arrived, it should be at your door this week.

SCALE: PINFALL! - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale.

TV TEMPO

Jan. 29-Feb. 4

(WWF/SYND.) - [CHALLENGE]: Rockers d. George South/Mike Davis; Curt Hennig d. Dave Wolfe; Bolsheviks d. Bronson/Coates; Tugboat d. Greg Brown; Hercules Hernandez d. Alan Martin; (From SNME) Hulk-Warrior challenge; Tito Santana d. Dino Bravo. RESTHOLD.
[SUPERSTARS]: Kingfish Rhodes d. Tony Burton; (From RUMBLE) Beefcake-Genius; Rick Martel d. Mark Reagan; Jim Duggan d. Mike Davis; Powers of Pain d. Butch Stanley/Chris Walker; Earthquake Tenta d. Mike Justice; Jake Roberts d. Ted DiBiase by DQ when Slick has Bubba Bossman bash Jake w. nightstick & reclaim Million $ Belt; BRO. LUV: Immediately after Roberts-DiBiase, Ted asks for belt, saying Slick has been "well paid" for his services. But Bubba gets angry, says he "cannot be bought," goes to the ring, unlocks Jake's handcuffs, returns his bag & and keeps the belt; INTERVIEW: Hogan and Warrior sound off about their "ultimate confrontation." POWERSLAM.

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: (From SNME) Hogan/Warrior d. Hennig/Poffo but Warrior clotheslines Hogan in melee after & the two trade bumps; Bravo d. Ronnie Garvin (who stretchers) after interference from Tenta; OTHERS: Brooklyn Brawler d. Jose Luis Rivera; Greg Valentine/Honky Tonk Man d. Len Wagner/Terry Bronson; Tugboat d. Brown; P.O.P. d. Stanley/Walker; Roberts d. Pete Sanchez & scares Virgil from ring when Virg tries to reach in snake bag to get Million $ Belt; Martel d. Reagan; Rhodes d. Burton; Tenta d. Justice. POWERSLAM.

(SCW) - Ted Allen d. Billy White; Chic Donovan/Billy Keith d. Dino Minnelli/William Bell; Mr. Wrestling II d. Kareem Muhammad by DQ when the Dynasty runs in. RECAP: Samuel Kent says he's leaving to become co-host of WVEU's SUPERSTARS OF WRESTLING. BOMB-PLUS.

(NWA/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: (NWA WORLD TITLE) Ric Flair d. Tom Zenk by holding trunks; DOOMED d. Keith Hart/Italian Stallion; WNN: Gordon predicts Flair/Sting/Arn will win at CLASH; Ranger Ross d. Joe Cruz; FUNK'S GRILL: Terry quizzes Arn Anderson who he'll be for in Sting-Flair match. DRAW.
[WCW]: Steiner Brothers d. Mark Kyle/Brad Batten; ANGLES: 1) Rick Steiner brings back Alex. 2) Jim Cornette runs when Norman tries to give him a hug; Freebirds d. Pat Rose/Hart; Samoan Savage d. Zam Panzer but Steve Williams saves Panzer from Samoan splash; Mil Mascaras d. Galaxian Alpha; Lex Luger d. Lee Scott; Rock & Roll Express d. Bob Cook/Terminator; Doug Furnas d. Galaxian Beta; Buzz Sawyer/Dragonmaster d. Robbie Idol/Cruz; LOUISVILLE SLUGGER: WOMAN demands Flair tell her "No."; Kevin Sullivan d. Sean Regal; Arn/Sting d. M.O.D. Squad. DRAW-PLUS.
[MAIN EVENT]: (NWA TV TITLE) Arn Anderson d. Bobby Eaton. Program shortened to 40 minutes. NO RATING OFFERED.

(NWA/SYND.) - [WORLD WIDE]: (U.S. TAG TOURNEY) Dynamic Dudes d. M.O.D. Squad; New Skyscrapers d. Ross/Norman but Steiners run in for save after; Zenk/Pillman d. Royal Family. NON-TOURNEY: Sting d. Panzer. DRAW-PLUS.
[NWA PRO]: (U.S. TOURNEY) Rock & Roll d. Cactus Jack/Brodie Chase, so Cactus beats up Brodie; Steiners d. Mr. Asia (Hacksaw Higgins)/Gladiator; NON-TOURNEY: Williams d. Kyle; Shane Douglas d. Mike Rotunda by DQ; INTERVIEW: Rotunda says Cactus is his tourney partner. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(USWA) - Chris Adams d. Texas Battleship; TEXAS TITLE: Kerry Von Erich d. Chris Youngblood; VIDEOS: Jeff Jarrett, B.J. Travis; GUITAR POLE MATCH: Jarrett d. Travis by DQ when Jerry Lawler bashes Jeff w. guitar before Kerry saves but Lawler nails Kerry with the guitar neck. Jarrett revives & creams Travis w. chair & Lawler retreats. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(CWA) - Matt Borne d. James Rapp; P.Y. Chu'i d. Battleship; Jarrett d. Jimmy James; Travis d. Terry Black; Dustin Rhodes d. Masked Marvel. BOMB-PLUS.

(ICW) - Roadblock d. Wrestling School Dropout; RETROSPECTIVES: Tony Atlas-Bob Orton; Dynamic Duo-Lethal Weapons; SEGMENT: Paul E. Dangerously says the only "real Steamboat" is Ricky; Vic Steamboat/Phil Apollo d. Reed/Michaels; Krunschki d. Kingpin; ICW TITLE: Atlas d. Orton DRAW.

(WVEU/SUPERSTARS) - Boni Blackstone expects to be nailed by new co-host Samuel F. Kent but Sammy surprises her with his friendliness. Randy Rose sends Kent a neck brace intended for "The Dynasty" but Kent says he's no longer part of them.

(LUCHA LIBRE/W.I.N.) - Lazertron d. KKK I; Bobby Bradley d. Chacal Rivera; Pirata Morgan/El Gran Marcus Jr. d. Falcon de Oro/Jalisco; Sarah d. Tiffany; Conan/Rey Misterio d. Ari Romero/Tim Talltree; 6-MAN: Guererro Brothers d. KKK II/El Emigre/Rivera. DRAW.

(PORTLAND) - Jeff Warner d. Al Madril by DQ; Ginger d. Veronica when Veronica misses w. knucks tossed by Scotty the Body. Ginger picks up knucks & decks Veronica for pin. Jonathan Holliday tries to interfere but Ricky Santana saves and both brawl; PACIFIC NW TAG TITLE: S. Rockers d. Grappler/Brian Adams to win belts but heels attack after & put Rex King in triple-stuffed piledriver; Beetlejuice d. Equalizer by DQ; Curtis Thompson d. Scotty; Bill Francis vs. Holliday in progress as show ends. ANGLES: 1) During interview, Ginger interrupts Holliday interview & slaps him in face. He shoves her to floor, "injuring her arm"; 2) Holliday/Grappler attack Santana & all come out for mass brawl; 3) Steve Doll says injury to King cancels Rockers' world tour; 4) Scotty grabs Pacific NW title belt & clobbers Thompson. POWERSLAM-PLUS.

(PWF) - Bounty Hunter I d. Dan Evans; Terminator d. Wild Thing; Brickhouse Brown d. Bear Stevens; LADIES PT. OF VIEW: Diane Hamilton says Buddy Landell is coming in; Steve Keirn d. Bill Ford; Mike Awesome d. Dennis Knight by DQ; Hurricane Walker d. Jim Backlund. BOMB.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Joe Pedicino, WES MINTER LIVE, WSB Radio, on Flair-Sting title match: "That's like Mike Tyson inviting Holyfield to come spar with him." 2. Scotty the Body, Portland, to Don Coss: "I hear you went to a mindreader and she had to give you your money back." 3. Coss, Portland, to Scotty: "Somebody tried to read your mind but they couldn't read the small print." 4. Jim Cornette, PH: "You know how to break up a Mexican party? Flush the punch bowl." 5. Cornette, PH, on Flair pinning Zenk: "Either he was holding the tights or he had Elmer's Glue on his fingers." 6. Jim Ross, PH: "I'm probably gonna be doing all-night weather on HEADLINE NEWS after you get through with Ted, Corny." 7. Jesse Ventura, WWF: "All Sapphire needs are a couple of antennae and she'd look like a bee." 8. Bobby Heenan, PTW: "Any of you people who own convenience stores and see Jake Roberts and his old lady drive up, lock the doors. They're gonna knock the place over." 9. Heenan, PTW: "With DiBiase's money, he's gonna get Bush to send in troops to get his belt back just like they did in Panama." 10. Cornette, PH: "Greenville, S.C., is so small, the zip code only has three digits."

11. Cornette, PH: "Last time we were in Greenville, (Joe) Pedicino went through the Sara Lee Bakery and they had to have a third shift just to keep up production. They have a Joe Pedicino Memorial Wing." 12. Lord Alfred Hayes, PTW: "Dusty Rhodes---all those long hours in the gym to stay in top shape---which Dusty always is." 13. Marc Lowrance, USWA: "Lawler, I'm trained for you. Terrence Garvin taught me how to respond." 14. Jerry Lawler, USWA, to Lowrance: "People videotape your commentary and send it to their friends to cure insomnia." 15. Norman, WCW: "I like Jim Cornette. He's fat like me. He wears the same color clothes as my Grandma." 16. Samoan Savage, WCW, to Dr. Death: "Your sister drink coconut milk in many men's huts." 17. Hawk, WCW: "Like the demolition experts that take down buildings, we are gonna be the plastic explosives." 18. Cornette, WCW: "I like kids, but only when properly cooked." 19. Cornette, WCW, on Mascaras: "He looks like a big pinata." 20. Rev. Billy C. Wirtz, PWF, on Terminator: "You can't get cultured pearls out of a handful of snot."

21. Wirtz, PWF, on Dan Evans: "They like to pay this guy what he's worth because there's a minimum wage law in Florida." 22. Pedicino, WSB, to caller asking where Lord Humongous is: "He's still around. He's not wrestling as Lord Humongous any more." 23. Cornette, WCW: "Pee Wee Anderson is the ONLY famous resident of Rome, Ga." 24. Cornette, WCW: "Arn Anderson is the 2-time winner of the Dom DeLuise Lookalike Contest." 24. Roddy Piper, WWF: "Glad Noriega's taken care of. Could be worse. I could be conducting Parliament in Romania." 25. Paul E. Dangerously, ICW: "If you people are the judge of Paul E. Dangerously, then I plead guilty."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Pedicino, WSB: "My ex-wife would tell you, I'm the worst person in the world to be married to ---because I'm married to my job." 2. Pedicino, WSB: "Every wrestling organization ought to set aside 30 seconds of time every week for anti-drug messages." 3. Cornette, PH: "WOMAN would do anything to have Ric Flair---under her tutelage, that is." 4. Bossman, WWF: "I CAN'T BE BOUGHT!" 5. Heenan, PTW, to Gorilla Monsoon: "You could get Ted Bundy out of the electric chair." 5. Lawler, USWA, to Lowrance: "You are the most boring individual on TV."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Ross, PH, to Corny: "Did your mother give Dana Kirk advice in Memphis before he came up for tax evasion?" 2. Cornette, PH: "Are Chris Cruise and Joe Cruz related?" 3. Corny, WCW: "What's the Savage's opponent's name? Zamfir Pan Flute?" 4. Lawler, USWA: "Marc, did you think when they named you an M.C., they meant Mental Case?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. THE FLYING FIASCO (Corny on Steiners' sawmill move on Mark Kyle). 2. THE NATURAL DISASTER (Jimmy Hart on Earthquake). 3. FAT-FACED PUNK (Bossman on DiBiase). 4. OLD SOCKFACE (Corny on Mil Mascaras). 5. ZAMFIR PAN FLUTE (Corny on Zan Panzer). 6. THE HOSS CARTWRIGHT OF THE WRESTLING RING (TBS on Norman). 7. THE FELIX UNGER OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING (Corny on Tommy Young).

INFLATION AWARD - Ron Jackson, PWF, for presenting MOST COLORFUL SPORTSCASTER IN AMERICA AWARD to Diamond Dallas Page, who "beat out John Madden and Dick Vitale."

BEST PICTURES - 1. WWF, DiBiase-Bossman showdown. 2. WCW, Steiners' "Flying Fiasco." 3. WWF, Jake Roberts' reax to Bossman's save. 4. WCW, Closeup on Flair reacting to WOMAN.

BEST FEATURE - ICW, retrospective on Atlas-Orton Jr.

BEST ANGLE - WWF, Roberts-DiBiase-Bossman.

BEST INTERVIEWS - 1. Paul E. Dangerously, ICW. 2. Hogan-Warrior, WWF.

BEST PROMO - TBS, TEXAS SHOOTOUT spot.

FUNNIEST TOUCH - TBS, Captioned English translation of Samoan Savage interview on TEXAS SHOOTOUT promo, including HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! over laugh at the end.

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - Ventura, WWF: "...let sleeping dogs lie." Ross, WCW: "...time will tell."

DREADED GLITCH AWARD - WXTX-TV, Columbus GA, for running Nov. 11 edition of NWA PRO WRESTLING.

BLOOPER AWARD - TBS, for saying Friday night Lex Luger was "boycotting TV" and then routinely showing a Luger-Lee Scott match on WCW Saturday with no boycott explanation.

TUBE TALK

WCW was hoping to have Tully Blanchard signed for the CLASH Tuesday night, so if he was there, likely he was instrumental in the attack on Sting. But the week before, Blanchard and his agent were ushered out of Jim Herd's office....CHICAGO CHALLENGE, that monumental Chi-Town series with Buddy Roberts and Leon Spinks been canceled. My tape of the Spinks interview will be a collector's item....I felt the Bossman-DiBiase-Roberts angle was one of the best-conceived ever on the WWF and the turn was quite effective because it didn't involve a heel attacking Bubba....A CBS News crew for SATURDAY NIGHT WITH CONNIE CHUNG was taping bits of the Jan. 26 Omni show. During one match, the cameraman---on the apron---was creamed during a crisscross. ....Demolition vs. Powers of Pain on next weekend's WWF SUPERSTARS. FSB.

STEVE BEVERLY

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committee session, Ric Flair---who'd been cordial in person to Joe---said, "I vote we take Pedicino off the air right now." That was a closed-door start to a rocky relationship between the two. At one point, Ric and Joe held a few long, productive talks and appeared to be bridging their gap. But Flair never cared for JPK. When the NWA champ became head booker, the heat intensified on Joe. Herd often defended Pedicino but strong wills and crossfire from The Committee made Herd's defense difficult. Joe was lectured that he needed to change his "attitude" that the only way to turn around the NWA was to clean house and start afresh.

The day of the Baltimore BASH, Joe was ushered into a room and given what was described as a 5-on-1 lambasting for expressing views contrary to the bookers' the previous week. Joe offered them to an NWA executive who had solicited his opinion, allegedly in confidence.

Virtually the entire year, Joe was accused of being a perpetual leak to newsletters. More widely read than MATWATCH, THE OBSERVER was the focus of most of those charges. Interestingly, Dave Meltzer and I have conversed about how Dave only spoke twice to Joe in 1989: once, when Dave called to congratulate him on the premiere POWER HOUR and once in a Nashville hotel before WRESTLE WAR '89. I was there for the latter.

Joe volunteered to Herd and others that he and I were friends more than two years before he was employed by WCW. Joe and Gordon Solie had been instrumental in helping me with graduate research at Auburn University into TV wrestling. Joe and I had mutual interests broader than pro wrestling (such do exist) and kept in contact.

NWA insiders tried to nail Joe as the tipster on Barry Windham's firing (he wasn't). I called Herd to confirm Barry's status and he asked how I knew. Of course, I didn't reveal the source but Herd said, "Some of the guys are gonna think it's Pedicino but he was editing until 2 in the morning and I don't think he knows yet." But Herd cautioned me about using certain items because some NWA personnel were trying to pinpoint Joe and others internally as a leak.

I offered several times to cease talking to Joe. His friendship meant more than the suspicion created. Joe would have no part of it. For the record, only four MATWATCH stories have ever originated with Joe Pedicino: 1) his engagement to Boni Blackstone; 2) his departure from WATL-TV in Atlanta; 3) the end of PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK; and 4) his NWA hiring. I'll take a lie detector test to prove it. Does that mean we never talked wrestling? Certainly not. But if issues arose he couldn't discuss, he'd immediately say, "I can't tell you about that," or "Call Herd." The wrestling grapevine doesn't rest on one guy and if I depended on Joe Pedicino for inside information, there would be no MATWATCH. None too popular, however, were Joe's calls for The Committee to take lie detectors to zero in on leaks. Joe offered to pay for his own.

The most telling obstacle Pedicino faced in WCW, however, was the most ridiculous one: HE NEVER PLAYED THE GAME. The mentality of so many pro wrestlers is that if one has never wrestled, never promoted or never been related to one who has, one is incapable of having a successful creative idea for anything in wrestling. To some, particularly the old Crockett group, Joe was a leech and a sponge. In their eyes, PWTW had been an avenue for an outsider to make money off of their work and they resented it. He'd never drawn money in a ring, so what could he possibly know about wrestling? Joe knew it. He heard the talk every week from his friends. Once, a dispute ensued over an interview involving a wrestler; Joe was told, "He's drawn a little more money than you have. Don't you think he knows better than you?"

If Joe leaves in disappointment, it is twofold: 1) he truly loved the NWA. He grew up with it in Georgia through the years and was brimming with enthusiasm that he could contribute; and 2) relationships with a few people he previously felt close to have been strained, though some with whom he disagreed remain cordial. Some of these are folks who will continue to be my friends and I have told Joe so. But he learned that in the business world of pro wrestling, friendships are as fragile as those in battle royals.

The Joe Pedicino story is but a mild one. Someone who's been on the battlefront in the past has described WCW as a "war zone." This story points out three key difficulties which WCW must overcome in attitude and self-defeat if it is ever to get to a top-flight level. They are things that have not happened solely to Pedicino:

1] Instead of worrying about 3,000 newsletter subscribers and what they know or spending time trying to plug "leaks" which may not be "leaks," why not better spend that time on making the promotion better? Every wrestler and committee member continues under a microscope that is ridiculous. A given: newsletters are not popular inside wrestling organizations, even with many wrestlers, because they do not revere every action of the participants. Second, only one bulletin in this country is purchased enough to support a guy's living and I can tell you it isn't mine. Third, wrestling executives have destroyed their own myths in big-city papers across America which reach far more readers than do silly bulletins. So, what's the rub?

2] It's time for WCW's main principals to "work together" as one, rather than harboring destructive egocentricities and jealousies. Joe Pedicino's going won't end the sniping or the snarling. The crossfire continues, through and through, and it's a fallacy of the committee approach, particularly when the bulk of the panel consists of active wrestlers or performers. I don't know if harmony is possible when competitors who happened to work for certain past opposing promotions still get ostracized by some committee members. If this group cannot tolerate creative differences without severing relationships, it's going to be tough to succeed. As TBS' own Skip Caray has described the front offices of baseball teams: "Guys, if they're all of the same mind all the time, we're in a heap of trouble."

3] This attitude that one has to have "played the game" to be a contributor is downright asinine. Did Grant Tinker ever write a TV show or act in one? No. But he sure knew how to pick the quality of TV shows to make NBC the number one network. Did Al Michaels ever play a minute of pro football or baseball? No. But I'll challenge you to find a better all-around announcer in network television. Did Ed Sullivan ever sing, dance or juggle? No. But he had a keen sense of what would entertain people, enough to maintain the longest-running prime time variety show in TV history. Did Brandon Tartikoff ever wrestle a fall? No. But he knew enough was right about the WWF to bring SATURDAY NIGHT'S

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STEVE BEVERLY COLUMN (Continued from Page 7)

MAIN EVENT onto the NBC late night lineup. For that matter, had anyone ever promoted wrestling the way Vince McMahon Jr. began doing it in 1984? No. And while he had a promotional lineage, he sure didn't learn his technique from his father. But enough people seem to like his way of doing things to have made him a $100 million fortune.

Did it ever occur to you that most of the wrestling promotions which have died in the U.S. since 1985 are those which were owned or heavily operated by wrestlers? Even the great Bill Watts, whom I still think ought to be in the business somewhere, could not survive a buyout.

Joe Pedicino had some different ideas, was a poor office politician, was often too blunt and had the misfortune of never having taken a bump. A few folks are happy to be rid of him. But Joe's departure hasn't wiped away the chalkboard of problems which World Championship Wrestling faces. Before too many fingers continue to be pointed in opposite directions, some WCW principals might best reflect on the words of Shakespeare in Julius Caesar: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves."

RATINGS RAP

PRIME TIME TOPS 2 MILLION; POWER HOUR BREAKS RECORD

Spurred by a replay of the SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT Hulk Hogan/Ultimate Warrior vs. Curt Hennig/Lanny Poffo tag match, WWF PRIME TIME WRESTLING last week became the first episode of a weekly cable wrestling series to ever deliver two million homes.

Scoring a 3.9 rating and 5.9 per cent share of audience, PTW was seen in 2.03 million homes on its Jan. 29 edition. Ironically, the peak rating came during a Brooklyn Brawler-Jose Luis Rivera match, when the USA series posted a 4.7 rating and 7.1 share (2.43 million homes).

In another record-buster, the NWA POWER HOUR, led by Ric Flair/Sting/Arn Anderson vs. Muta/Buzz Sawyer/Dragonmaster, broke its all-time ratings mark with a 3.1 and 5.1 share (1.63 million homes). A series of family movies leading into POWER have drawn stronger than expected audiences and most are staying around. The Denver Pyle film MOUNTAIN MAN fed a 3.2 lead-in to POWER.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP also continued its strong outings with a 3.6/6.9. The replay of the previous night's six-man match posted a 4.2 (2.2 million homes) and a whopping 8.2 share, best since TBS reached the 40-million home clearance mark.

In syndication, the WWF is maintaining a two-point lead on the NWA for the first two weeks of the new year. Through Jan. 14, WWF is averaging an 8.8 to the NWA's 6.8.

CABLE

Week Ending Jan. 29	Rating	Share	Total Homes
WWF PRIME TIME (USA 1/29)	3.9	5.9	2.03 million
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 1/27)	3.6	6.9	1.89 million
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 1/26)	3.1	5.1	1.63 million
WWF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 1//28)	2.6	6.6	1.34 million

REPLAY: NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 1/27) 0.9/7.8, 472,500.

PAST 2 WEEKS

Week Ending 1/15	
WWF/PRIME TIME	3.0/4.4
NWA/WORLD CHAMP.	2.9/5.5
NWA/MAIN EVENT	2.9/4.6
WWF/ALL-AMERICAN	2.5/5.8
NWA/POWER HOUR	2.3/3.8
NWA/POWER HR. (R)	1.2/9.8

Week Ending 1/22	
NWA/WORLD CHAMP.	3.2/6.1
NWA/POWER HOUR	2.7/4.4
WWF/ALL-AMERICAN	2.4/5.9
WWF/PRIME TIME	2.4/3.6
NWA/POWER HR. (R)	1.1/9.3

SYNDICATION

	Week Ending Jan. 7 Rating/Stations	Week Ending Jan. 14 Rating/Stations
WWF	8.2/236	9.4/242
NWA	6.4/168	7.1/169

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